

May 2010



[ReachOut for New Futures](#), our social enterprise, was nominated by the Highline School District for the regional Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) Community Leadership Award for extraordinary service to schools and students.

ReachOut applies our 17 years of successful on-the-ground experience with diverse families to promote systemic change and teacher excellence through cultural competence training for educators in schools throughout the state. ReachOut trains individuals and organizations in the best practices, strategies, and principles that New Futures staff uses to engage families of all cultures.

“ReachOut for New Futures has been a partner with Highline Public Schools over the past four years in our journey toward equity and cultural proficiency,” said Catherine Carbonne Rogers, the school district’s director of communication and community engagement.

“Because the majority of our students are children of color and the vast majority of our staff is white, cultural competency is high priority for Highline. We know that if we are going to serve all our students well, we must know how to reach and teach students who come from cultures different than our own,” Carbonne Rogers explained. “While it is relatively easy to agree to this in principle, it can be very difficult to operationalize in the day-to-day practices of an institution like a school district. That is why our partnership with ReachOut has been so critical.”

The WASA award is presented to community members or groups in recognition of their outstanding contributions toward education. Criteria for the award include benefit to students, leadership, motivation, success, cooperation/coordination with local district, recognition by others, and a history of service.

“The focus on cultural competency is prompting district leaders to examine institutional systems and practices that create barriers for communities of color,” Carbonne Rogers said. “Our school board is currently working on an equity policy that will hold the district accountable for equitable practices. The work ReachOut has done with administrators and teachers laid the groundwork for the policy development. We are grateful for the expertise and the ‘push’ ReachOut has provided to move Highline toward equity for all students.”

For more information about [ReachOut for New Futures](#), contact **Director Heidi Schillinger** at [heidis@reachoutfornewfutures.org](mailto:heidis@reachoutfornewfutures.org) or 206-248-9647.